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Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO USNMR SHAPE IMMEDIATE
CINCEUR IMMEDIATE

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EXDIS MILITARY ADDES HANDLE AS SPECAT EXCLUSIVE

FOL RPT BONN 2057 ACTION SECSTATE INFO NATO BRUSSELS 6 FEB.

QUOTE

BONN 02057

EXDIS

DEPARTMENT PLEASE PASS USNMR SHAPE AND CINCEUR

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, MILI, NATO, US, GW
SUBJECT: FURTHER INFORMATION ON GERMAN POSITION
REGARDING NORTHAG BRIGADE

REF: BONN 919 ; BONN 951

1. BEGIN SUMMARY. IN ATTEMPTING TO LEARN MORE ABOUT
THE GERMAN POSITION REGARDING THE NORTHAG BRIGADE, AND
HOW THEIR APPARENT OBJECTIONS CAN BE MET, WE HAVE
LEARNED FROM A NUMBER OF OFFICIALS THAT CHANCELLOR
SCHMIDT APPEARS TO HAVE BOTH POLITICAL AND MILITARY
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RESERVATIONS. THESE ACCOUNT FOR HIS DECISION TO SEND A

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LETTER TO THE PRESIDENT (REFTELS) WHICH WE UNDERSTAND HAS NOW BEEN SENT. END SUMMARY.

2. GENERAL BRANDT, THE SENIOR DEFENSE MINISTRY OFFICIAL ON INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS, STRESSED SCHMIDT'S APPARENT POLITICAL CONCERNS. HE TOLD THE POLITICAL COUNSELOR THAT SCHMIDT WAS DISTURBED TO NOTE THAT THE NEW BRIGADE WOULD BE STATIONED NEAR THE WESER RIVER, IN WHICH SCHMIDT RECALLED AN ISRAELI SHIP TO HAVE DOCKED FOR LOADING ISRAEL BOUND SUPPLIES IN 1973. THIS, APPARENTLY,IS WHAT LED TO SCHMIDT'S FEAR THAT THE US WAS PLANNING TO USE THE BRIGADE ELSEWHERE THAN IN GERMANY. BRANDT SAID THAT SCHMIDT WAS ALSO CONCERNED ABOUT THE POSSIBLE COMPLICATIONS OF THE BRIGADE FOR MBFR AND ABOUT THE DANGER THAT THE PRESENCE OF THE BRIGADE WOULD BE USED BY OTHER COUNTRIES--MOST SPECIFICALLY BELGIUM, HOLLAND AND DENMARK--TO JUSTIFY FURTHER REDUCTIONS IN THEIR OWN FORCES.

3. BRANDT ALSO SAID THAT SCHMIDT BELIEVED LEBER SHOULD NOT BE NEGOTIATING FRG FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR THE BRIGADE, BUT THAT THIS SHOULD BE HANDLED BY THE FINANCE MINISTRY. IN THIS CONNECTION, BRANDT OBSERVED, THE TOTAL FRG EXPENDITURES FOR SUCH PROGRAMS AS THE BARRACKS REHABILI-TATION, AWACS, THE BRIGADE, AND OTHER SUPPORT, COULD COME TO TEN PER CENT OF THE GERMAN MILITARY BUDGET IF THE FRG TRIED TO DO EVERYTHING.

4. WHAT BOTHERED THE CHANCELLOR MOST, BRANDT SAID, WAS HIS FEELING THAT THE AMERICAN PRESIDENT WAS NOT FULLY COMMITTED TO THE BRIGADE NOTION. BRANDT SAID THAT SCHMIDT RECALLED HAVING RAISED THE MATTER BRIEFLY WITH PRESIDENT FORD DURING HIS MOST RECENT WASHINGTON VISIT. WHEN THE PRESIDENT DID NOT APPEAR TO BE FULLY BRIEFED, SCHMIDT CONCLUDED THAT THIS WAS NOT A MATTER WITH FULL PRESIDENTIAL BACKING. THAT WAS ONE REASON SCHMIDT WANTED A LETTER DRAFTED FROM HIMSELF TO THE PRESIDENT.

5. THE GERMAN CHIEF OF STAFF, ADMIRAL ZIMMERMAN, HAS EXPLAINED LEBER'S RESERVATIONS IN SIMILAR TERMS. HE HAS
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SAID THAT LEBER FOUND IT DIFFICULT TO DEAL WITH OUR FINANCIAL REQUEST SINCE IT WAS NOT WITHIN HIS AREA OF AUTHORITY.

6. DR. LOERCK, A SENIOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS OFFICIAL IN THE CHANCELLERY, HAS DESCRIBED THE CHANCELLOR'S CONCERNS PRINCIPALLY IN FINANCIAL TERMS. HE SAID THAT HE COULD SEE EVERY DAY THE GREAT PRESSURE THAT THE CHANCELLOR WAS

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ASSERTING AGAINST THE BUREAUCRACY IN ORDER TO CONTROL THE FEDERAL BUDGET AND TO KEEP THE DEFICIT AS SMALL AS POSSIBLE IN THIS ELECTION YEAR. HE SAID THAT A SUM OF DM 300 MILLION REPRESENTED AN ENORMOUS ADDITIONAL EXPENDITURE IN THE LIGHT OF THE CHANCELLOR'S INJUNCTIONS, AND HE INDICATED THAT THIS WAS THE CHANCELLOR'S PRINCIPAL RESERVATION. HE DID NOT DWELL ON THE POLITICAL OR STRATEGIC ISSUES, WHICH WE ASSUME THE CHANCELLOR DISCUSSED PRIMARILY WITH LEBER.

7. AS WE TOOK ADVANTAGE OF THESE CONVERSATIONS TO DEVELOP THE ARGUMENTS IN FAVOR OF THE BRIGADE AND TO POINT OUT THAT THE STRATEGIC REASONS FOR PUTTING IT INTO NORTHERN GERMANY WERE SO CLEAR THAT IT SEEMED INCOMPREHENSIBLE TO REGARD THIS AS MERELY A BASE OF OPERATIONS, OUR VARIOUS GERMAN INTERLOCUTORS HAVE GENERALLY AGREED AND HAVE SAID THAT THEY HAVE EXPRESSED THE SAME FEELINGS TO THE CHANCELLOR. HOWEVER, APPARENTLY HE REMAINS TO BE CONVINCED.
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